

For Release
Wednesday, October 22, 1969

In the fall of 1970 the Department of Religion at Sir George Williams will inaugurate a new Master's program in Judaic studies, the first in Canada and one of only a handful in North America. It will be followed in 1972 by a Ph.D. program.

The new graduate program supplements the University's present courses in Jewish history, Bible, and Jewish philosophy. This year 300 students are enrolled in these courses, and many who wanted to enrol had to be refused.

The new program is being organized by Professors Jean Ouellette and Burton M. Leiser. Professor Jean Ouellette, a graduate of the Université de Montréal, holds a Ph.D. from Hebrew Union College (Cincinnati and Jerusalem.) He has also studied at the Ecole Biblique Française and the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, and has been on the supervisory staff of the Harvard archaeological mission at Gezer in Israel. Professor Leiser, who is on leave from the State University of New York in Buffalo, holds a Ph.D. from Brown University, as well as a Master of Hebrew Literature from Yeshiva University. He is the author of "Custom, Law and Morality: Conflict and Continuity in Social Behavior," and has written widely on subjects varying from the Dead Sea Scrolls to extremist political movements.

The program has several aims. One is to help meet the serious lack of trained educators in Jewish studies. Another is to develop well-prepared people to fill the many positions open for social workers, camp and other counsellors,

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and community organization administrators, possessing a good knowledge of the cultural heritage of the people they will be working with. To this end, the University will develop evening programs and special summer institutes.

It is also hoped that SGWU will become an important centre for the preparation of text books on various aspects of Jewish studies.

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